

# The Commonweal

*A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs*

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## FACE TO FACE WITH WAR

THERE can be no doubt that Mussolini's blunt rejection of the compromise formula proposed for the settlement of the Ethiopian question raises issues of such tremendous moment that every business man in his store and every worker in his shop ought to take earnest and interested notice. We do not feel prepared to endorse either of the disputants. It may well be that Italy has a greater measure of justification for her action than has yet become evident. Only the romantic can believe that the African kingdom soon to be made the target for a modern mechanized army has achieved a social order of such value that the world would be poorer without it. Such questions may, however, be left to one side while things of major significance are earnestly considered.

First, there is going to be a war which the international machinery developed since 1919 is powerless to stop. Ethiopia is a member of the

League of Nations, and therewith party to an agreement through which its rights are fully guaranteed by its peers. But today—only fifteen years after the League began to function—an Italian dictator can disregard the pledges given by virtually all the civilized powers, without forcing his own government to withdraw from the commonwealth of nations. A World Court, established to hear just such cases as this, is not even granted a chance to arbitrate. If all this does not mean a return to old fashioned diplomatic methods, and indeed to methods which are a direct threat to every conception of world security, what does it mean? War contingent upon Ethiopia's refusal to accept the judgment of an arbitrator would be bad enough; but war despite the most elementary principles of international law is catastrophic.

Of course one realizes full well that this is not the first offense against the spirit which was

supposed to animate the League. The manifold wrong doing which the victors of the World War strove to perpetuate at Geneva reaped its harvest of resentment and distrust. That the most important concession made to the vanquished—the protection of minorities in new states—was not vigorously enforced, while every onerous obligation was exacted to the last dot, is one good reason why the European scene is what it is today. Nor was the colonial policy which followed the war very much better. Landgrabbing on a vast scale was as characteristic of the defenders of civilization as buzzing is of the bumblebee. Even so, progress was made. Little by little a better temper crept into international relations. It is only now, despite the actions of Japan and Germany, that a death blow impends.

Second, this particular conflict bears the earmarks of a race war. Every observer of events in Africa realizes the great changes which have occurred in the Dark Continent. In his forest hospital, Dr. Albert Schweitzer began to notice some years ago subtle alterations in the native mind. A new solidarity, a new activism, had begun to appear. This judgment is confirmed by nearly every observer who has studied the scene. We do not know when a new and greater Mahdi may loom up, having at his command a wealth of armament materials which the opponent of General Gordon had to do without. That a protracted struggle between Italy and Ethiopia will end one period of African development and inaugurate another is the conviction of thousands of well informed men.

The repercussions of such a race conflict in the United States must necessarily be tremendous. Already minor clashes between Italians and Negroes have been reported, and the likelihood of far more impressive disturbances is only too great. We know that officials in several of our cities regard the future with genuine anxiety, as they weigh the pressure of fanaticism on the race groups involved. Behind the congressional move to enact a comprehensive neutrality policy there is the legitimate fear that the interest taken in one side or the other may get out of hand.

Viewing both issues in perspective, one sees readily that while the impending war threatens the order which civilization has striven to establish, it also gives cause to think that forces of elemental disorder, of social and racial chaos, are about to be unleashed. We think, therefore, that no reasonable means ought to be left unused to avert the calamity. Above all, can the United States do anything? In behalf of the Catholic Association for International Peace, Professor Charles G. Fenwick addressed an open letter to the Secretary of State, from which we quote the following passage: "Since the Pact of Paris was signed, there has been no other case of

threatened aggression and conquest, except the Japanese incursion into Manchuria, which so violates both the spirit and the letter of the Pact. . . . Unless the United States is willing to go at least so far as to repudiate the aggressive declarations of Italy; unless we are willing to say that we do not intend to remain indifferent spectators of this act of aggression; unless we are willing, at least, to marshal the forces of public opinion against Italy and to show to the world as well as the nations immediately concerned that there are some 'benefits' of the Pact of Paris, then our solemn ratification of that treaty becomes a mockery and our future efforts in the same direction can only give rise to a cynicism which must be fatal to peace and goodwill among nations."

Whether one agrees with this statement or not, it is impossible to doubt that it is greatly to the interest of the United States to hinder an outright declaration of war. We venture to suggest, therefore, that Mr. Roosevelt make a serious effort to intervene in the same spirit that his distinguished name-sake carried out his mission to end hostilities between Russia and Japan. This step would be quite in conformity with any decent concept of neutrality, since it would carry no threat other than that involved in public opinion interested, for excellent reasons, in the preservation of peace. We believe that the President's tact and political ability would serve him well, and that he would not be misled by a too impulsive desire to settle all the issues which underlie the dispute. He could, however, with the sentiment of the United States behind him, make it quite clear that the world must set more store by the Pact of Paris than by conquest, if a modicum of order is to survive.

The United States is here in a peculiarly fortunate position. It has no territorial stake in Africa; its relations with Italy are most friendly. Its people are united in the desire to maintain peace with other countries. Therefore, if the President, actuated by a quite realistic interest in the probable long range outcome of hostilities between a free African kingdom and a dictatorship anxious to gain a famous victory, were to express boldly the fears and hopes which live in the hearts of most citizens of the Old World and the New, the effect would be just as impressive as were the Theodore Roosevelt or the Woodrow Wilson peace pleas. The outlook for success would be far better. After all, Mussolini will not squander in a month the good will which it took years to amass. And even if the effort should fail, we would at least have the satisfaction of knowing that through no fault of ours was western civilization once again the slave of Mars. In this sense we petition Mr. Roosevelt to take bold, prudent and intelligent action.

## Week by Week

**D**UE WARNING has now been served that Congress plans to adjourn speedily. That day cannot come too soon. Two things of such primary importance interest the nation that haggling over details of further reforms, no matter what arguments be adduced in their support, serves only to confuse and irritate nearly everyone. The first is the administration of the work relief measure; the second is the effect of the so-called "credit inflation." Billions of dollars are waiting to be put to work efficiently so that the unemployed may have jobs and wages, while industry as a whole profits by the expenditure. As yet no clarity exists on the subject. An action which must be carried out with enthusiasm and cooperation is now suffering badly from listlessness and dissatisfaction, largely because the public mind has been snared into debates about matters of relatively little importance. The second is something for which millions have been patiently waiting. Having decided that only a program of "reflation" could bring the United States through the depression without too much suffering, the government ought now to seek by every means in its power to guide the available monetary energy into places where a maximum of employment and earning power can be produced. These are great executive tasks, for which adequate legislative authority has been granted. Why not concentrate on them? Why not concentrate on real work and let the hypotheses alone temporarily? It is greatly to be feared that the services to social reconstruction rendered by the Roosevelt administration will be seriously jeopardized if wrangling about a dozen different extraneous matters does not cease promptly.

**WE EARNESTLY** commend the letter which His Excellency, the Bishop of Hartford, caused to be read in the churches of his diocese on August 18th. Noting that an unusually heavy toll of life had been taken recently through automobile accidents, the letter stressed the moral responsibility which rests upon all to do everything in their power to safeguard the lives and property of others. It is certainly a duty of the most solemn kind which now confronts every motorist. He knows now, unless he has managed to escape miraculously the impact of appalling statistics, how perilous it is to drive a faulty machine, to treat himself to reckless bursts of speed, and to disregard traffic rules. "Thou shalt not kill" is a fundamental commandment, and it is surely high time we remem-

bered that an automobile seldom kills of its own accord. The instigator of a fatal, or even of a serious accident, should think not merely of economic loss and humanitarian regret, but also of his possible wrongdoing in the eyes of God. Most deplorably Sunday, which is dedicated to religious worship, is also the occasion for many of the ghastly mishaps which in a year take as heavy a toll as a great battle. Nothing short of a crusade against our collective failure to notice adequately the peril to which we constantly expose ourselves and others will effect a remedy. The matter is a most suitable theme for pulpit discourse, as Bishop McAuliffe has suggested.

**SUMMARIZING** the "untold hardship" which millions have endured during the past five years, the "Labor Sunday Message, 1935," issued by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, stresses what it holds to be an important and encouraging fact. "For the first time in human history, man has the technical knowledge to solve his economic problem," we read. "Recent governmental estimates and other authoritative studies have indicated that had our plant been used to capacity in 1929 over \$4,000 in goods and services could have been supplied to every American family. Nevertheless, 16,000,000 American families, or nearly two-thirds of our people, actually received in that year less than \$2,000." The Committee believes that "effective means must be found to eradicate sins of selfishness and to make this abundance available to all." But it declares that the formula cannot be found unless there is the kind of discussion guaranteed by fundamental American law. "True Americans and true Christians," it declares, "must be ever alert to repel any attempt to deprive them of these civil rights so important in a democracy. Moreover, they must champion these rights for the weakest among us, for if one group be suppressed it will only be a question of time until such suppression is extended to all who dare voice opposition to those temporarily in power."

**IT HAS** often been noted that if the attack upon revealed religion were not so tragic, much fun could be distilled from it. Hostility to the Jesuits has, for example, been carefully nursed in Germany, so that thousands of persons who did not even suspect the existence of the Society have now been informed of its numberless vices and crimes. Singularly enough, however, no concrete instances of Jesuitical turpitude can be found! It is easy enough to say that they were monstrous during the seventeenth century, but even *der Deutsche*

*Michel* would like to get a little closer to 1935. When, therefore, monks and nuns were brought to trial for offenses against the laws regulating the use of foreign exchange, it was sincerely hoped by Nazi worthies that a long procession of Jesuits could be headed for the penitentiary. But, alas, not a single member of the Society was on the list! Hitler's organ, the *Völkischer Beobachter*, thereupon solved the problem in its issue of August 6. A front page headline announced: "Jesuit Father smuggled 150,000 marks out of the country." On the next page, the charge was substantiated, under the same headline. Father Sebastian Aigner, procurator of the Redemptorists in Munich, was found guilty of breaking the laws. But—"the Congregation of the Redemptorists was suppressed in Germany in 1871," says the paper, "as being an Order related to the Society of Jesus." Thereupon Father Aigner became a—Jesuit! We feel that both Jesuits and Redemptorists will be amused at the ease with which their identity can be destroyed in Germany. But this further little proof of Nazi chicanery might as well be remembered by those who are interested in what is happening to civilization.

*Civis Americanus* NOWADAYS in this country there is steady talk of taxation; and a good deal of it is devoted to the delinquent and dishonest taxpayer. Of course publicity is all in favor of rascals, and those who show ingenuity in evading assessments are much more colorful copy than those who, with dull and unresourceful punctuality, pay them. But all this contributes to a completely mistaken impression. From being unsung, these heroes come gradually to be considered nonexistent; the wholly unjust opinion grows that no American pays taxes without first trying to get out of them. Thus, when James Truslow Adams, in the *New York Times*, recently renewed his impressions of England, and described with respectful wonder how the British citizenry cheerfully queued up on request to pay taxes ahead of time in some budget crisis, the perhaps unconscious suggestion was that nothing of the sort was possible here. It is time that the actual facts received due attention; that the American taxpayer was appreciated as he really is, in all his sporting promptitude—and in all his numerical impressiveness. The assistant to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, Mr. Wright Matthews, evidently feels so, for he has just described this truly Forgotten Man in a speech to the Economic Conference for Engineers. It is his stirring testimony that 95 percent of our income tax payers perform this duty without querulousness or quibble; "the remaining 5 percent furnish all the complaints." The citizens in the mass make their returns as a matter of course;

tend, in cases of error, to overcharge rather than undercharge themselves; and in general behave in a manner to warm the heart of a government tax official. These kindly words should cause no surprise to the thoughtful student of our country. Despite a thousand weaknesses, democracy is really at home here, and Mr. Matthews has merely expressed that truth in another way.

*W*ILL ROGERS and Wiley Post are sincerely mourned. Their sudden death in the frozen marshes of the northernmost point of the American continent was a startlingly tragic end to their happy-go-lucky adventuring. Both of them were in the pioneer tradition of our country and there was a certain appropriateness in the news of their death being brought by an Indian who had run fifteen miles to the nearest settlement at Point Barrow. Will Rogers was himself partly Indian and he was, as may be judged by the extent of the national expression of sorrow at his death, most completely representative of a type considered to be specially and uniquely a product of this country. For all his cowboy mannerisms and his choice of the vernacular, he was a gentleman: just that, he was gentle, kindly. He had a remarkable faculty for joking about events that were currently being held of the greatest importance and he did this in such a manner as to allay any existing or possible rancor. There was no venom in him and he did restore a kind of humble humanness where this was in danger of being smothered by pomp and circumstance. Wiley Post twice circled the globe by airplane, once alone. These feats were history making and remarkable enough to give him national distinction, and he also, like Rogers, touched the heart, possibly because he was a one-eyed man and there could not but be some appreciation of his achievement in spite of handicap and also because he too had a cheerful, neighborly sort of simplicity and fortitude that we like, and do well, to think of as native traits.

*WE DESIRE* to call the attention of our readers to Father Joseph J. Mullen's article in this issue, which sets forth some good reasons for attending the Seventh National Eucharistic Congress, to be held in Cleveland, Ohio, from September 23 to 26.

*A Feast of Prayer*

A famous non-Catholic jurist remarked the other day that the administration of justice was in sore straits primarily because of the prevailing ignorance of theology. As much might be said of all other realms of human endeavor. A Eucharistic Congress is a great act of adoration; and such acts are necessarily the first steps toward our emancipation from evil.

## REVAMPING IRELAND

By SEAN O'FAOLAIN

**T**URNING the pages of my diary I find that a year ago just after the summer recess of our Dail three elements defined our political course—a land bill of a revolutionary nature, conflict over General O'Duffy's Blueshirts, and Mr. De Valera's promise to alter and reform, further, and in accordance with his republican ideals, the constitution of the Free State.

As I write the Dail is still in session and in storm, but the course of things about which it argues remains fundamentally the same.

That land bill speeded up the division of the large estates, or ranches, to relieve congestion. There were 170,000 farms in Ireland under £7 in valuation—too small, uneconomical. To relieve these, any farm over £2,000 in value has now to be developed or the owner must sell out. More tillage, less cattle—that is the government policy. And, to make up for the loss in our cattle trade, following our dispute with Britain over land annuities, resulting in tariffs on both sides ruinous to our cattle trade, the government policy extends to the development of industries which will, to put it graphically, eat our own cattle for us and consume the new produce of the land.

In other words, the land bill was merely part of a new economic policy which, in the meantime, has continued on its way with other enactments. The budget of this year annotates the position. The N. E. P. of rigid protection brought in a large harvest to the Minister for Finance in the shape of tariff income; but insofar as the new factories of the Minister for Industry have been effective the tariff income has begun to disappear. That has been Snag Number One. The result has been a whole series of new levies on the consumer: still higher tariffs to protect and speed up the native industry (often non-existent at the moment), tariffs by way of revenue where there never will be a native industry (on rice, for example), and, most important of all, taxes on butter, flour, tea and tobacco. There is hardly a thing which is not spotted by the Minister's pen. One definite result is that cost of living has gone up here by, in my reckoning, 45 percent. I have compiled at random a list of a dozen articles bought by an Irish housewife, from canary seed to rolled ham-and-tongue, and com-

*The Irish situation is not merely of absorbing interest, particularly by reason of the social and economic experiments now in progress there, but it has now clarified sufficiently to make comment valuable. Mr. O'Faolain's paper, written on the spot, incorporates the views of one befriended with groups in all the parties. Another interpretation, by an American, will appear very soon. The interesting thing about Irish economics is their bearing on "emotional nationalism," says the present paper.—The Editors.*

pared the hole it made in her purse with the hole the same purchases would make, today, in the purse of a London housewife. The English housewife, I found, could do it cheaper by about \$1.00 in every \$2.50, i. e., for every two-fifty spent by the Irish house-

keeper her English friend will save one.

On the other hand, if the tariff income has fallen because of the increase in home production, that should mean that unemployment here is dwindling. Unhappily we cannot be at all sure of that. These figures are elusive and one of the regrettable things is that the government refuses to issue a list of its new "factories." Besides, tariff income may have fallen simply because people do without things that are too dear to buy, even as, conversely, cost of living has not gone up solely because imported goods are dearer; the home product is generally more expensive than the imported article.

The government has, one must remember, forced the pace with its policy; for example, imported rubber footwear is taxed under the present budget because next October a factory will open in Cork for the manufacture of these goods which cannot, obviously, be on the market for next winter.

Recognizing that hardship has resulted from this forcing of the pace, an important measure has been the special coal-cattle pact with Great Britain whereby a monopoly of the Irish market has been given to English mines, and a proportionate amount of our cattle is bought back by Great Britain. Again the consumer is hit, for while German coal was being imported the British mine owners dropped prices to compete, and we could buy their coal cheaply if we did not wish the far cheaper Silesian coal. Mr. De Valera is quite honest in saying the farmers are not alone in the front line trenches during this economic war. Meanwhile it is a race with time. Those factories must go up as quickly as possible; they must become as efficient as possible; farm produce must be consumed by them; prices must fall. But Mr. Cosgrave is not dishonest either when he points out that to manufacture for forty millions and to manufacture for three means a difference of, for example, two shillings on every boot made in Ireland.

On the side of social services we have been generous. Unemployment relief is now given to men and women even where they have contributed nothing to any scheme. Free milk is available for the poor. A widows' and orphans' pensions bill is on the mat. Nobody denies the merit of such schemes. Nor, as long as we can afford to pay, do we grudge paying. Prophecy, as George Eliot said, being the most egregious form of error, I do not intend to say whether or not I think we can afford such schemes. I do say that if we can it is—paradoxically—because our standard of living is so low. There is little real wealth or luxury in this new Ireland; we are accustomed to the simple life. A more cultivated and luxurious civilization would not stand for such schemes, such impost, such burdens, in the name of a future possible better world.

The second element in last year's politics was O'Duffy. He may now be discounted. He has broken with his more constitutional allies in the Dail and founded a national party aiming at a corporate state, but he lacks everything necessary for success: money, the help of clever men, a parliamentary mouthpiece, even personal picturesqueness. His *Wearing of the Blue*, which did the trick a year ago, is outlawed.

On the side of the fundamental position, the old struggle with English domination, Mr. De Valera has not made any progress. The Oath to the King was abolished in 1933, the governor general later reduced to a formula (nobody ever even thinks of him now), but after that nothing happened until just a week ago the English Privy Council in an important case, *Moore v. the Attorney General*, decided that the Statute of Westminster of 1931 has given the Free State Parliament power to disregard every limitation on its authority. Writing in the *London Spectator* of June 21, Professor A. Berriedale Keith points out that this means, simply, that "the Parliament of the Free State is recognized by the Privy Council as absolutely sovereign."

Here would appear to be the reality of absolute freedom achieved at last by the Free State. It can abolish the governor general. It can forbid the presence in Ireland of the Imperial forces who still have certain limited rights in one or two corners of the Free State. But, as the professor also points out, it is one thing to invalidate a treaty by legislation and another to annul it. It can be made impotent. But its obligations remain until, under international law, it is abrogated by mutual consent, or found invalid by international law for good reason. We can have and can do everything we wish to have and do; but England will always say that the treaty obligations remain and that we are bound by it however much we evade it. The charge of not recognizing our word can always be thrown at us.

A nice tangle, which nothing but economic pressure is likely to settle by some means or other.

Politics aside, the old everyday life carries on just as it always did, though there is, as always, far too much preoccupation with politics and little else is thought of or talked of. This becomes in the end an exasperation. It narrows down conversation and it tends to limit our interests. One tries to deflect the conversation from Ireland but back it comes again and again like the moth to the candle. Perhaps that is for the moment inevitable where the economic stress is so powerful, but it is, none the less, to be regretted. It breeds abstract minds and it threatens to end by producing a metaphysical type of Irishman, all words and wind, endlessly debating the theory of new policies. On the other hand, if it is true—as some of us often think here—that our racial fault is an overdevelopment of sensibilities and an underdevelopment of intellect, will not the very stress of economics ultimately drag us down to the rock bottom of realities? Will we not be forced to reconsider our values of life and living? Will we not be astonished some day to find that after looking for a sunburst we produced a factory? And when we have overdeveloped life on the material side—it sounds such an odd development to fear in a Celt—we may, then, swing back to the opposite way of life. For the interesting thing about our new economics is that they are based, ultimately, on our emotional nationalism and have not been thought out fully in all their implications, as yet. They have for the time being led to "fumbling in the greasy till," they must end by forcing us to remember what it was all for, and where it all started. Then we shall take leisure by the hand and realize that the spiritual and cultural side of life also requires attention.

As things are, however—and one must be realistic—that can hardly come until some truce is called in the political field; for however much one tries to persuade even the most intelligent people that cultivation can go ahead of political affairs instead of lagging in their wake, they will tell you, if they are at all bitten by the nationalistic bug, that "nothing can be done until the main thing is done." One sighs over such an attitude; one calls it an inhibition and a complex, but if one knows one's history one accepts it and does not call it obscurantism. It is in the blood of Irishmen, and whether it is good or bad, it has to be taken into account. That is why any review of Irish affairs is always, for the moment, almost wholly occupied with matters of political or constitutional interest, whose effect never touches on international affairs and the recounting of which must give to outsiders something of the feeling that we are being very insular, if not actually parochial, in this modern Ireland.

## THE CONSUMER DEMURS

By T. SWANN HARDING

**B** EING myself a simple, sheeplike consumer I feel like bleating piteously now and then. This happens when I read articles by advertising men who regret that certain prejudiced and nasty people, both in and outside federal government service, are chamber of horror minded and abuse advertisements unfairly. For, we are told, advertising is only rarely, not at all frequently, misleading.

It is quite as true that certain pious and sanctimonious people, who pose rather sententiously as consumer friends, actually defeat their avowed aim of giving consumers effectual aid by adopting an attitude so dogmatic and prejudiced that their pronouncements are often misleading and sometimes false. It should always be remembered that many manufacturers and advertisers strive diligently to give the public honest service. It should not be forgotten either that the ordinary run of producers are quite as much afflicted with ignorance, stupidity and gullibility as are we.

After all we are creatures of orientation and that frame of reference of ours determines in the long run how we see the world about us. If we work for Consumers' Research we shall see things quite differently than if we work for a cancer cure concern. Government officials charged with enforcing the Food and Drug Law see things differently from either of these groups. But even the most careful and scrupulous manufacturers and advertisers cannot have exactly the point of view of government agents.

Not long ago the maker of one of our most successful fake cancer cures, an impotent syrup of no therapeutic value for the disease, died. He died of cancer. He did not treat himself with his cancer and scrofula syrup at all, however. While in his phase of producer he always thought government agencies unfair when they interfered with his business; in his phase as consumer he wanted the very best, not a fake nostrum, not even his own.

The difference between a manufacturer or an advertising man and simple consumers is that the latter do not have the other phase of their lives deflecting them from their steady interest in the art of consumption—the science of getting their money's worth.

Just a week or two ago I had my downstairs floors refinished. First I received bids from three or four local floor concerns on a sanding and waxing job. They ranged from \$14 to \$26. Like most Americans I decided that the jobs that were cheap in price would be no good, so I discarded

them. One concern bid \$36, but they said their job was different and they supplied me with prolific folders and advertisements to prove this. They put their finish right down into the floor; then they sealed it; then they polished it and all your troubles were over. The floor would not scratch, it would not stain, it would not show wear. I bit. I paid. I got a job as durable as, and no more so, than the \$14 wax job.

I have investigated frauds. I have published two or three books on frauds. I was long a subscriber to Consumers' Research. I have long admired the boys in the Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission and, though I have never worked in either, I have kept informed about their work, yet I bit like a simple sucker on that great floor finish because the advertising described it so beautifully.

I bit on the Umphrex finish for my walls—durable, would never crack, simply wash them off, walls are done forever. I bit and paid well and the walls cracked profusely. I bit on the paint job done with the best paints and it all peeled off. But what when I appealed to the manufacturers who had so seductively advertised these things? I got a lot of advice and no satisfaction.

In other words I was told that the floors, the walls, and the exterior trim wood of my house were in some vague and disturbing way quite abnormal and different from the ordinary run. Though these finishes were absolutely permanent and durable without qualification in the advertising, they really meant under "normal" conditions and they were the final judges of normality.

Those things have happened to me constantly in my twelve years of house owning and I know no way to get around them. Moreover the buying of the house itself like the buying of each car, was a process filled with uncertainty, salesmen's innuendos at each other, and efforts to make me think that the home or the car I purchased was just no good at all. In both cases I got so perplexed that I didn't know what I was doing and finally bought hit or miss.

I freely admit that the consumer is not done to death or injured in health for life as often as Consumers' Research would have us believe. I admit that most of the cheats are of an economic character, but the wear and tear on my disposition alone has been very considerable. Furthermore the false advertisements and the frauds are not quite so rare as members of prominent advertising firms would have us believe.

For upon reading the aforesaid article I rooted around the house for five minutes to find a magazine that carried advertising. I found two, both of them eminently respectable, one of them a woman's magazine of the usual character and the other a religious periodical. I shall not name them, neither shall I name their advertisers, for they are in no way conspicuous and comparisons are invidious if not odious.

Taking the woman's magazine first, I found this: A weak liquid antiseptic recommended for halitosis, which is usually a deep seated ill not to be cured by superficial means; a probably harmless general tonic falsely recommended for almost every ill; a product to use to avoid "coffee nerves," which good medical specialists say does not exist; one dentifrice overrated to accomplish fundamental correction of serious tooth, mouth and gum ailments, and another to remove film and whiten teeth, which the American Dental Association says is impossible; two perfectly disgusting advertisements for sanitary napkins; veterinary remedies recommended for both human beings and animals, yet of no especial value for either; a soap to banish body odor, which it does most imperfectly and ephemerally; and a soap the use of which is said to prevent "cosmetic skin," whatever that is — a disease doubtless produced by the pure cosmetics elsewhere advertised.

It may be said with some justification that these are mild economic frauds so far. But I also found advertised four corn cures, and all corn and bunion cures can be dangerous, while the advertising statements of some have been curbed by the Federal Trade Commission; a remedy for psoriasis, a serious skin ailment for which there is no known remedy; two laxatives which contain the dangerous and harmful drug phenolphthalein; a mild laxative mothers are advised to give children whenever they are naughty, and when they may not need it; a dangerous obesity cure; a gray hair dye containing poisonous mercury and another which is not altogether harmless; one kidney cure so dangerous the Federal Trade Commission and the American Medical Association have sought to curb it and another that is pernicious, in that no kidney disease should be self-medicated; an advertisement suggesting that all and sundry use the dangerous drug aspirin with the utmost freedom; a fraudulent gadget for deafness, and an ear oil against which the Food and Drug Administration has taken action.

Turning to the religious periodical I find in its single issue: the weak laxative now recommended for children if they are quiet; a dentifrice to end pink toothbrush and another to whiten teeth, claims the American Dental Association has declared unjustifiable: a milk of magnesia for "indi-

gestion" or acidity, both vague ailments that may be serious and cannot be diagnosed in lack of the best clinical facilities; a preparation to use to avoid colds, something science knows nothing about; a harmful hair dye; two corn and bunion remedies, the advertising of one of which had to be curbed by the Federal Trade Commission; a fake deafness cure; a fake rupture cure that is dangerous as well, for rupture should not be self-medicated; a preparation to remove excess hair, whereas nothing should be used but a razor; the fake veterinary remedies for humans and animals, and a bronchitis dope making claims the Food and Drug Administration no longer permits on its labels because they are false claims.

I am willing to believe that these producers were not conceived in sin and born in iniquity any more than I was. I do not regard them as a pariah class. I adopt no holier than thou attitude. I can even realize how they might sin in utter and virtuous rectitude. It is difficult to believe that the producer of a fake cancer cure could believe it good for other people, but not for himself, though he may merely have believed that producers and advertisers were composed of better quality clay.

A few years ago when the Food and Drug Administration looked into the liquid antiseptic business they found many manufacturers who honestly believed that any liquid was antiseptic if it contained a trace, no matter how small, of carbolic acid or of mercury bichloride. Again, there was the producer of a laxative known to me who turned the advertising over to an agency which in time began to make claims for the stuff that not even he could believe. Naturally then I think producers and advertisers are no more immune to ignorance and credulity than are we consumers. But could not some form of education be evolved to end that condition? If producers and advertisers really want to serve us bleating consumers they would do well to exercise their brains on that problem for a while.

### *Dawn*

Over still waters leaned the painted dawn,  
Columned with clouds that glowed with hidden sun,  
As day came singing; softly a dappled fawn  
Came down to drink before the night was done.

Trailing long legs the great blue herons passed  
Low over dawn-stained water, and the rings  
Of widening ripples where a fish had splashed,  
Feathered with rose the shadows of their wings.

A lifting murmur stirred the willow leaves,  
While small waves scattered silver toward the shore;  
The little dawn wind strengthened in the reeds,  
And birds took up the song of day once more.

MAUD E. USCHOLD.

# VACATIONS AND PROGRESS

By JOSEPH J. MULLEN

THESE sultry days vacation is the thing. We plan in pleasant anticipation and the crowd is feverishly packing and speeding off on land and sea—"terra marique." Traveling bags are all too small and leave no space for ethical treatises. We must moralize beforehand. Challenged in the midst of delightful, far-off phantasying, maybe we are curious to know what a classical, pagan ethicist like Aristotle suggests or dictates about these weeks of summer vacationing. Those not familiar with the exalted tone of the natural virtues in Aristotle might presume that this non-Christian ethic would benignantly promise something of a welcome, philosophical justification to even the more heedless, lawless, off-the-regular-stride type of modern vacation; for vacation time is often different, even as in the days of Saint Augustine: "in occupationibus sancti, in otio perierunt." Some perish on vacation who, whilst busy at work, led holy lives. The more thoughtful reader might even be interested in comparing the reflexions of Aristotle with those of an outstanding Christian thinker like Aquinas.

It is a long way back to the days of Alexander the Great. We are far removed from that thirteenth medieval century of Saint Thomas; but, then as now, there was the human problem of recreation, of play, of sports, of distracting amusement, of a definite holiday recreation or vacation. Even if one knows the art of arranging a vacation, nevertheless any given individual, even though an artist in this field, remains a man with human responsibility toward this phase of his human activity. This greater liberty of vacation time must be regulated by reason or, to be more positive, must be offered to God. So there is the problem of the ethics of our vacation. Both Aristotle and Aquinas understood and discussed this problem and would talk about a special, distinctive virtue of vacationing. Pagan Aristotle, even within the limited sphere of that needed rest which can be found in jokes and laughter and comedy, adds to our scientific vocabulary the term *eutropia*, the name of a forgotten virtue. Today we may acknowledge whether we have been scurrilous, but how few measure up to the Aristotelian ethic of consciously practising a special virtue of *eutropia*! Indeed so few, that even as in his day, many pass for happy humorists who are in reality to be condemned as sinful buffoons. And how few austere souls are aware that they may be sinning negatively by defect against this necessary social virtue.

The Christian moralist of the thirteenth century is far more explicit. Aquinas does not limit the discussion to Aristotle's *eutropia*, a virtue centering on the mental rest which results from the enjoyment of what is comical. He demands a special virtue preoccupied with the rational regulation of bodily activity. This bodily activity, this physical exercise, is voluntary behavior, and ethics must judge whatever is voluntary. Maybe we are ethically sluggish when it never occurs to us that many of our sports and their bodily technique, golf and swimming and dancing involve the practise of a special Thomistic virtue. In all this bodily exercise there is rational choice and reasonable moderation to be attended to. Internal spiritual attitudes are finding external expression. Even without our own introspection, the psychologist, like the son of Sirach, may learn much just from the observation of our play. He observes the fisherman in the trout-stream, or the throng at Coney Island or the debutante at Cape May being snapped for the rotogravure, or the spectator at a prize fight or the social dancing at a night club. "The attire of the body and the laughter of the teeth and the gait of the man show what he is." This bodily activity, this behavior calls for patient, industrious improvement (a fact not to be denied, at least for golf), and it brings up multiplied social contacts. All these circumstances create a definite subject matter for virtuous endeavor and ethical responsibility. Even though it is question of merely external muscular, bodily exercise, yet we find the extensive subject matter of a special virtue. If in America we follow up intense energetic application to business with a proportionate, needed devotion to recuperating sports, then this is a virtue which we should not be overlooking.

Since recreation and particularly the intensified recreation of vacation means the practise of a special virtue, there are some obvious applications, which are at variance with the idols of the market. First of all, planning to practise a virtue, we reject whatever contradicts virtue and would be a false note, spoiling the balanced harmony of our general virtuous, rational performance. Neither may the purpose of vacation be lost sight of. Vacation is a human need. It is the antidote of physical and mental fatigue. Finite human energy lessened by intense, strenuous or sustained effort must be restored, and recreation is the means to restore it. Rationally seeking recreation, we are prompted by a zeal to prepare for continued service. That is the justi-

fication for the relaxation and our freedom from productive labor. In comparing the human values of work and play, vacation is relatively less important and must be kept subordinate. There would be a topsy-turvy inversion of values if our only thought was release from work in order to play. We spend a vacation to fit ourselves for life's work. It is a virtuous activity. It is not to be spasmodic but have the acquired balance of a habit. It is a virtue but it must be subordinated to more essential, more dignified virtues. It is a virtue which only finishes off, integrates the perfection of complete human performance. So listening to Aristotle and Aquinas philosophize we find another confirmation of the extensive, exacting demands of natural virtue even as interpreted by pagan thought. Ethics asks rational restraint, and expects intellectual motivation for all behavior before we may call it truly human and moral and befitting our rational dignity.

These ethical ideals of their philosophers may have been disregarded by the pagans, but we may look expectantly to Christian lives to find these virtuous principles better ratified by becoming practise. In environments traditionally Catholic recreation is not divorced from religious influences. The observant American tourist in Catholic lands must have been surprised at the spirit which animates the crowds at blessed spots of pilgrimage. The funereal seriousness we see assumed at Mt. Vernon or Arlington is missing. There is something of holiday joy pervading the throngs, particularly buoyant youth. You see it at Lourdes and at the Spanish Benedictine shrine of Mary at Monserrat or in the festa processions of Assisi or any delightful Italian village like Gennazano or Viterbo. The diocesan pilgrimages of France to Lourdes do not exclude the intention of vacation and holiday excursion. Tourist agencies or the government railroads advertise these trips just as any other excursion to the watering places. Diocesan authorities have had preliminary novenas of prayer and inspirational doctrinal instructions on the entire mystery of Lourdes. Charitable groups have arranged for the nursing of the sick, but the coaches of these *malades* with their bustling cornette sisters of Saint Vincent are relatively few compared with the double section trains which leave the Cathedral cities with such *éclat*, annually bringing the enthusiastic youth of France in such large numbers to the inspiring shrine of Mary Immaculate which nestles in the mountainous beauty of the Pyrenees. And here is the moral miracle of Lourdes which must not be overlooked even when we marvel at some particular miraculous cure of an afflicted body. Large representative groups of the youth of France annually choose Lourdes for their holidays. They participate for three days in the

colorful liturgical functions. They daily receive Holy Communion at Eucharistic Lourdes. Not with heretical formality, but with Catholic freedom, in hymns and canticles, they rejoice in the dramatic, impressive afternoon and evening processions. They bid a touching Rosary farewell to Mary at the Grotto, and spiritually revived and sanctified, physically invigorated too with their mountain excursions, with no remorse nor embittered vacation memories, they return to the next year's work and to life's problems. That abiding, far flung, leavening influence of Mary is something extraordinary, a phase of the moral miracle of Lourdes. They found a Christian peace of prayer, maybe of repentance. There was the acceptance of the rich graces which the Mother of God obtained for them, and there was genuine relaxation. There had been mountain climbing and wholesome social activity and a development of Catholic neighborliness on the journey. Here there is found a vacation more than realizing every point of speculative principle enunciated by an Aristotle and Aquinas. Here is recreational activity more than meriting to bear the name of a special natural virtue.

The Seventh National Eucharistic Congress, being held in Cleveland, Ohio, from September 23 to 26, offers us an opportunity to imitate the virtuous example of our Catholic brethren in Europe. The Catholics of America, so devoutly Eucharistic, should not overlook this Congress as the outstanding religious event of the year. Our usual humble, consoling private devotion in the solitude of a parish church is not enough. A Eucharistic Congress asks that we socialize our faith in the Blessed Sacrament, and express it in hosannas of triumph, and sing full-throated *Te Deums* and *Lauda Sions* of praise so that these blessed echoes may be heard and noted even by those who have "gone away." The Church has instituted not only the parish feast of Corpus Christi. In our own day and for our own age she has formally approved and officially promulgated solemn Eucharistic Congresses. The intimate friendship approach to Christ that will come with the nation assembled about the Congress tabernacle, the peace and calm and beauty of Catholic liturgical prayer and music, and the religious experience and richer consciousness of Catholic solidarity, in spite of its intrinsic spiritual worth, will in no way conflict with the mental relaxation we virtuously are seeking on vacation. We may dare not to imitate sheepishly the materialistic world in its ways of finding recreation. We may be more than feebly virtuous. We may take advantage of the rich potentialities of Catholic life and not only virtuously rationalize vacation, but on the occasion of this exceptional solemnity even supernaturalize and Christianize our vacation of 1935.

## MAURICE BARING

By WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

HERE is one of the most brilliant of contemporary men of letters; original, learned, wise, witty, humorous, tender, sympathetic, whose published works show an extraordinary versatility. He is a novelist, critic, poet, dramatist, historian, and his autobiography, "The Puppet Show of Memory," is one of the most charming books of the twentieth century. The word "genteel" is used today only as an insult; but what Tennyson called "the grand old name of gentleman" has lost no prestige with the judicious; I know of no better example of the true gentleman in literature than Maurice Baring.

He was born April 27, 1874, the fourth son of Lord Revelstoke. He was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. He studied for the diplomatic service; in England one has to study for it, pass severe examinations, and show some qualifications. Mathematics, always to him incomprehensible, kept him back for several years; but finally he overcame even that obstacle, and was attached to the British legation in Paris, in 1898. His love of downright mirth and jollity and wholesome nonsense often broke through the formalities of diplomatic dignity; but he rose rapidly in the service. He was transferred to a more important position at Copenhagen, then at Rome; and was special correspondent for the London newspapers in Constantinople, the Balkans, Manchuria and for three years in Russia, 1905-1908. He has a thorough knowledge of the Russian language, which he speaks fluently, and has made many translations; his book, "Landmarks in Russian Literature," is admirable; but his almost fanatical enthusiasm for Dostoevski made him unjust to the supreme artist, Turgenev. He was, however, one of the first Englishmen to call attention to Chekhov.

He did notable service in the war, becoming a Major and Wing Commander of the Air Force.

He has published about fifty original works, of which I am especially fond of "The Puppet Show of Memory," "Lost Lectures," "Landmarks in Russian Literature," "Diminutive Dramas" and the novels "Daphne Adeane," "Comfortless Memory," and "The Coat Without Seam."

Many years ago, in partnership with Hilaire Belloc, he edited *The North Street Gazette*, of which only one number appeared—now much sought after by collectors. Its humor is irresistible. In his book, "Lost Lectures," he says he has suffered all his life from the fact that all the highbrows think he is a lowbrow, and all the lowbrows think he is a highbrow. What he is may be accurately defined as a splendidly cultivated literary artist.

There is a loyalty in Major Baring's character which seems to me wholly admirable; he is loyal to the Catholic Church, to his country, to whatsoever things are honest and of good report. And I do not know where one can find anywhere a more beautiful case of loyalty to a school than in what Mr. Baring says in "Lost Lectures" about Eton.

It has become quite fashionable among certain novelists to represent the schools which they attended in their youth as sinks of degeneracy, depravity, stupidity, and cruelty; so that a stranger from another country, who really knew nothing of these institutions, would obtain a curiously distorted picture. Mr. Baring says that every moment of his years at Eton he would like to live over again; that he is certain it is the best school that ever existed; that in every athletic contest he wants Eton to win. He says this with a jolly laugh, but it is refreshing, like all antiseptic laughter.

There is a quality in everything this man writes; it is difficult to describe this. But remembering that he is as modest as he is distinguished, that he combines humor with reverence, a passionate loyalty with outrageous mirth, we may come near to understanding him.

*Comfort for Communists*

"In January of last year, Bezboznik complained that antireligious Soviets had been disbanded in seventy districts; while it had been thought that in the region of Kovrov there was a whole system of atheist cells, the President of that region wrote . . . that neither in the town or in the region were there any cells left—in fact, 'in the entire district there is now only one organized atheist—myself.'" (From an article by C. C. Martindale, S.J., in the *Catholic Herald*, May 11, 1935.)

I'm all alone; I can't organise anyone,  
There's nobody left to organise me;  
And still I'm the only organised atheist  
In all the province of Skunktz (E. C.).

Sometimes disgusting disorganised atheists  
Orphan the stars without permit from me,  
Unmake their Maker without their ticket  
Or their copy of Form X 793.

The Blasphemy Drill's getting slacker and slacker,  
Free Thought is becoming alarmingly free,  
And I'll be the only organised atheist  
Between the Bug and the big Black Sea."

Ours, ours is the key, O desolate crier,  
The golden key to what ills distress you;  
Left without ever a God to judge you,  
Lost without even a Man to oppress you.

Look west, look west, to the Land of Profits,  
To the old gold marts, and confess it then  
How greatly your great propaganda prospers  
When left to the methods of Business Men.

Ah, Mammon is mightier than Marx in making  
A goose-step order for godless geese;  
And snobs know better than mobs to measure  
Where Golf shall flourish and God shall cease.

Lift up your heart in the wastes Slavonian,  
Let no Red Sun on your wrath go down;  
There are millions of very much organised atheists  
In the Outer Circle of London town.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

# Seven Days' Survey

**The Church.**—It is estimated in the August-September number of *Catholic Missions* that the total sum required for the mission needs of the Church is \$25,000,000 a year; the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in all Christian countries raised \$3,600,000 last year. \* \* \* At La Crosse, Wisconsin, August 18, the Most Reverend Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, officiated at the Pontifical Mass which marked the opening of the eightieth annual convention of the Catholic Central Verein of America and the nineteenth annual convention of the National Catholic Women's Union. \* \* \* The "China Christian Year-Book, 1935," indicates that there are 89 Catholic bishops in China, 14 of them Chinese. Of the 4,014 priests, 1,647 are Chinese; there are also 3,319 native Sisters. The Catholic population of China is 2,702,468, and 465,000 persons are at present preparing for baptism. \* \* \* Catholic residents of Pachuca, capital of the State of Hidalgo, have sent a petition to the local legislature asking for the reopening of the churches for public worship. Copies of the petition were also sent to President Cardenas and to the Governor of Hidalgo. Students in the State of Guerrero are said to be on strike. The Rector of the National Autonomous University of Mexico announced that the University had funds which would cover the costs of operation only through August and September, and the National Confederation of Students has appealed to President Cardenas, Portes Gil, president of the National Revolutionary party, and Minister of Agriculture Cedillo to secure the necessary funds. \* \* \* More than 20,000 persons participated in the annual pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick, a mountain on the summit of which Saint Patrick, in the year 441, is believed to have fasted and prayed that the Faith might never fail in Ireland. \* \* \* A committee of Catholics has circulated a petition in various French hospitals requesting that a Mass be broadcast throughout French territory every Sunday for the benefit of those who are not able to assist at Mass in person.

**The Nation.**—Just as agreement by Senate and House conferees on the tax bill was announced and the Senate, having passed the Eastman Railroad Reorganization bill, was about to take up the Guffey-Snyder Coal Stabilization bill, last of the "must" measures designated by the President, a resolution for the maintenance of American neutrality in case of war was introduced by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a filibuster to force its immediate consideration was organized. The resolution would keep American citizens and our arms manufacturers strictly out of war zones. Though it was jammed through the Senate, doubts were expressed that it could be rushed through the House. \* \* \* The agreement on the tax bill deleted one of the main recommendations of the President, the inheritance tax, and adopted increased

surtax rates on incomes in excess of \$50,000, instead of on those above \$1,000,000 as the President had suggested. An amendment by Senator Borah prohibiting future issues of tax exempt federal securities was struck out. \* \* \* On the same day that the neutrality resolution was introduced, a new giant United States Army bomber with a wing spread of 150 feet set a world record by flying non-stop 2,300 miles in nine hours at an average of 252 miles an hour, and 250 officers and 4,400 men of the First Division of the Regular Army, by being mechanized with 525 trucks, twenty-five tractors and three twelve-ton tanks, made a march of thirty miles and went into action in sham battle in 90 minutes, as compared with an estimated 24 hours of exhausting marching which would have been required without the mechanization. \* \* \* A poll being taken by Mr. Robert E. Lucas, director of the Republican National Committee in the Hoover administration, showed Republican county chairmen's choices for presidential candidate in the next election were in the following order: Senator Borah of Idaho, Colonel Frank Knox of Illinois, Governor Landon of Kansas, Mr. Frank O. Lowden, Senator Vandenberg of Michigan, former President Herbert Hoover and Mr. Ogden Mills.

**The Wide World.**—After a considerable amount of diplomatic maneuvering, the three-power effort to settle the Italo-Ethiopian dispute failed dismally on August 18. Mussolini not only turned down the compromise proposals submitted as a basis for discussion, but lost his temper and accused the French and British of attempting to outwit and double-cross him. So abrupt was the conclusion that a real possibility of hostile measures by Great Britain—e.g., closing the Suez Canal and lifting the arms embargo to Ethiopia—seemed well within the range of probability. The situation on the Continent was likewise exceedingly serious. The French government was faced with the peril of choosing between Britain and Italy, and Il Duce was held to be weighing important concessions to the Germans. While an emergency meeting of the British Cabinet was being called, Baron Aloisi, speaking in behalf of Italy, declared that his country might not send delegates to the September 4 session of the League of Nations. "We should be sorry to leave Geneva," he said, "but if we are shown the door we shall have no option except to get out." The Italian government closed ten trade exchanges in order to tighten government control over the sale of commodities. Later dispatches stated that Italy would attend the September 4 session and there argue its case against Ethiopia. \* \* \* Speaking at Koenigsberg, Dr. Hjalmar Schacht severely castigated "irresponsible elements making war on Jews and Christian Churches." The most important thing he had to say was, however, this: "It is absolutely essential for the leadership of our economic policy that

confidence in Germany and in the law remain unshaken. . . . The necessary laws are in preparation and must be awaited. Until then, the existing laws must be respected." But on August 19, Dr. Franz Guertner, Minister of Justice, told an international convention of jurists that on September 1 Germany would be given a new legal code under which "actions against the folkic sense of what is right" can be punished even if no laws governing such actions exist. The logical consequence must be that every judge will have the power to enact the quasi-laws under which he hands down decisions. \* \* \* London was reported as planning to convene an informal five-power naval conference in October. There would follow a formal seven-power conference, the new parties being the governments of Germany and Russia.

\* \* \* \*

*Mr. Hopson.*—After an absurd controversy with the House Rules Committee, the Senate Lobby Investigating Committee finally, on August 15, forced Howard C. Hopson, chief of the Associated Gas and Electric holding utility company, to give it a certain amount of information about his immense financial and lobbying activities. The information has not been at all digested, a process which is expected to go on well into 1936 and to form a portion of campaign activities, but several bits have proved interesting. Mr. Hopson, with another man, controls a Massachusetts holding trust which controls the majority of the Class B (regular voting) stock of the A. G. E., which is parent company to something like 198 large operating companies. Right now dividends are in arrears on the Class A and preferred shares of the company so that his power over A. G. E. is temporarily in legal abeyance, but his control goes on. The Wheeler-Rayburn bill has so annoyed him that he has worked fourteen hours a day fighting it and has spent about \$900,000 of A. G. E. funds in the process. His family is meanwhile kept in funds by income from personal companies that sell services to A. G. E. His lobbying has concentrated on newspapers and on individual Congressmen. His office keeps a daily check-up on the mail and telegrams Congressmen receive in connection with the utility bills. He believes that lobbyists should take the offensive, and he has done so. By threatening withdrawal of advertising he has tried to influence all newspapers, especially the Scripps-Howard chain and the New York Times with which he has had trouble. The Hearst and Gannett chains agree with him sufficiently, although he has objected to Mr. Brisbane's writings. The Times, he claims, is under hostile influence from J. P. Morgan and Floyd Carlisle. In the middle of his campaign (which he attempts to carry out on the witness chair) he directed a switch from an appeal to reason to an appeal to emotion which would stress the position of widows and orphans. This was forced on him, he asserts, by propagandists who tell lies for the opposing side. He stresses with all possible vehemence the crucial importance of the holding company bills to the businesses he is associated with. The Wheeler-Rayburn bill, as a matter of fact, has apparently died for this session in conference.

*Semaine Sociale.*—The twenty-seventh Semaine Sociale gathered at Angers, France, twelve archbishops and bishops, representatives of eight foreign countries, and at each meeting from 1,000 to 3,000 theologians, historians, economists, law professors and trade unionists. The subject discussed was corporatism. There was no proclaimed unanimity of theory and there were no resolutions passed, but the subject was discussed exhaustively from many points of view. Our reports would indicate that in general the corporate organization was conceived as distinct from the state. Trade unionists were very reserved, not expressing complete confidence in the hope advanced of free horizontal organizations forming with liberty professional organisms. The internal organization of corporations was not dwelt upon as exhaustively as the possible relationships between the professional units and the state. Most of the speakers apparently believe in trade unions meeting unions of business owners and forming mixed commissions for the particular industries. The powers and duties of these mixed commissions of professions (or industries) were debated at length. Some feared the corporations might tyrannize individuals in the industries; some feared they would set up a centrifugal force that would create anarchy in the state. Would these corporations have legislative or consultative or judicial power in relation to the state? Many believed they would form a sort of intermediary between the individual and state. They were asked for to ward off both "statism" and liberalism. No one gave a description of what the state power would be and what the state would represent if it existed in a sovereign and regulative position above the pictured corporate organization. Several speakers showed how the trade unions are saturated with corporatism and pointed out all the growing industrial and professional conferences and associations which are a basis for a corporate structure. Next year the Semaine Sociale will take place at Versailles and the subject will be the relations between divers civilizations.

*Public Works.*—In New York State where \$15,000,000 monthly is being spent on work relief projects, an impartial commission of engineers and men and women with civic interests and standing in the community has been investigating the values, outside of the immediate end of saving the unemployed from starvation, of the work being done. Their detailed report declares that "the whole findings are deemed favorable." The cost of the projects was rated 35 percent greater than it would be under average contract conditions due to the fact that the special purpose of work relief made impossible the maintenance of the highest efficiency. The salient deficiency was found in lack of supervision, overmanning and lackadaisical labor. With regard to the usefulness and necessity of the finished works, the commission found 95.5 percent were worthwhile, 3.3 percent in the border zone between usefulness and waste, and only 1.2 percent definitely undesirable. Less than 1 percent had no survival value. Adequate designing, planning and specifications and the employment of qualified consulting engineers, architects and supervisory personnel were declared

to be of great importance and greater use of non-relief talent urged. As to the burden of upkeep likely to fall on communities for maintenance of the projects, it was found that 29.4 percent would require no additional costs and in some cases would effect a saving when compared with maintenance costs of facilities previously in use; 60.9 percent would entail little future costs, and 9.7 percent would require future costs considered excessive. In conclusion, the commission states that "substantial public improvements have been consummated" and that these "will contribute a community benefit."

**Drama Revival.**—It was announced in Washington that during the next twelve months the Works Progress Administration will be allotted \$3,000,000 to revive a nationwide interest in the legitimate stage. The country is to be divided into ten regional units; Drama Unit companies are to be sent out on definite circuits. The plan is to build up a wholesome taste for the theatre among people who have not patronized the theatre before. To this end a Drama Unit company will introduce its repertoire in a new community with "sure-fire" farces and comedies like "Your Uncle Dudley," "Friendly Enemies" or "The First Year." As the audiences become accustomed to the medium of the stage, more ambitious productions are presented until near-classics and classics like "Abraham Lincoln," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "Julius Caesar" have been reached. Once the public demand for the theatre is sufficiently revived, it is expected that commercial producers will take over some of the circuits and there will be a genuine return of the "road." It is estimated that these W.P.A. projects will give employment to 50,000 people, about one-third of them actors. Eventually an aroused public interest in the drama would result in increased government revenue in taxes on theatre tickets. The extent to which these performances are being held at present is not generally realized. New York City alone has 500 places for regular performances which are attended each week by from 200,000 to 300,000 persons. The New York Drama Unit already employs 450 professional actors and operates a workshop which produces all the sets and costumes needed, shoes and wigs excepted.

**What Is Fame?**—By way of making his debut in the films as conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham commented on a relative lack of vast learning which seems to characterize movie producers. He made the point in an anecdote reported in the following manner by the London correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune*: Three film producers called to invite Sir Thomas to cooperate in a musical story he was free to name. "My mind naturally gravitated toward what is the most magnificent and unequalled story for any film," Sir Thomas declared. "I said, 'What about the Odyssey of Homer?' One of my three picturesque looking visitors asked, 'Who is Homer?' I replied, 'Homer is probably the most distinguished man of letters the world has ever known.' Thereupon the second visitor commented in pensive and somewhat melan-

choly accents, 'Oh my, but won't his fees be heavy?'" But after all matters like that are reported by college senior examiners nearly every year. And surely a movie producer has to keep up with the times.

**Birth Control.**—The *New York Times* reports that the Most Reverend John Gregory Murray, Archbishop of St. Paul, has decreed that every Catholic in his archdiocese must relinquish membership or employment in any organization which advocates birth control, under penalty of excommunication. The edict, which was read at all the Masses throughout the archdiocese August 18, is quoted as follows: "Hereafter no individual or group of individuals or society may accept or retain membership in any organization recognizing or supporting birth control or sterilization." The occasion of this pronouncement was, in the opinion of the *New York Herald Tribune*, the adoption of a birth control resolution by the Minnesota State Social Work Conference, while the *Times* ascribed it to the sponsoring of birth control by two national women's organizations that counted many Catholic members in the archdiocese. It was recently reported that Rosary College of River Forest, Illinois, had joined the College of St. Teresa of Winona, Minnesota, in withdrawing from the American Association of University Women because of the association's acceptance of an item concerning birth control proposed by its committee on legislation. At a special meeting, the Toledo Diocesan Council of Catholic Women protested the action of the Federation of Women's Clubs on birth control and requested all individuals and Catholic organizations to withdraw their membership in the Federation if the action is not rescinded.

\* \* \* \*

**Liquor Trade Control.**—A permanent structure for control of the liquor business is being set up by the present Congress to replace the Federal Alcohol Administration. Both the House and Senate have passed measures which are now being reconciled in conference. The Senate bill more nearly conforms to the plan outlined by the administration, in requiring the sale of distilled liquor in bottles, as at present, rather than permitting its sale in barrels, as provided for by the House measure; and in creating a Federal Alcohol Commission of three members, no more than two of whom can be of the same political party, rather than establishing a division of the Treasury for liquor control, as provided by the House contrary to the wishes of the Treasury. Under the Senate measure, brewers would not be subject to federal regulation, whereas the House would subject various branches of the malt beverage industry to federal control. Brewers are said to be divided on this issue. State laws generally include beer with spirits and wine in their provisions for regulation. The Senate bill requires all distillers, rectifiers, importers or dealers in spirits and wine who operate in interstate commerce to obtain permits from the Alcohol Commission under pledges to observe specified fair trade practises.

## The Screen

By GRENVILLE VERNON

### *Alice Adams*

UP TO its last five minutes "Alice Adams" is all that a film should be. Its acting, its photography, its telling of the story, and the story itself are all fascinating; and, best of all, until those fatal last five minutes the adapters have departed not at all from the honesty of Booth Tarkington's novel. "Alice Adams" is not a pleasant story, but it is a very human and poignant one, and one informed with a severity of insight which is not always the case in Mr. Tarkington's novels. Its depiction of the small town girl, whose aspirations are above her walk in life and who by her pitiful little hypocrisies has driven away from her all the young men of the town, and who finally loses the rich young man from out of town through her striving to appear more important socially than she really is, is the best piece of character drawing Booth Tarkington ever attained, and to say that the film is until just before the end worthy of the novel is to say much. "Alice Adams" shows that when set to it scenario writers and directors can be artists, and, despite the lack of a third dimension, that the screen can approximate the quality of the legitimate stage. That the producers should just before the end have seen it necessary to inject a happy ending, in which Alice gets her young man instead of, as in the play, losing him and, because of the realization of why she has lost him, setting out to rebuild her life on a more honest base, is regrettable, but at least there are only five minutes of this falsity. It is undeniable that the story is a painful one, just because of its bitter truth, and movie audiences are said to be averse to truth when truth is bitter. But to every adult man or woman the box-office ending in "Alice Adams" is more painful than the hour and a half that had gone before.

Miss Katherine Hepburn plays Alice as she has never played anything before, and proves once and for all that she is an artist of taste, intelligence, and subtle imagination. The character of Alice Adams is not an easy one to portray, for it can be projected only by an actress who is a mistress of half tints and delicate shadings of emotion. Such an actress Miss Hepburn is. She has been accused of not being able to run the gamut of the emotions, and possibly depth of feeling is not yet hers; but poignancy of feeling is certainly hers—that and intellectual understanding. For an actress as young as Miss Hepburn these are much; there is time enough for her to learn to plumb the depths and rise to the heights. It is indeed a pity that she did not wait another year before attempting to storm Broadway, or at least that she didn't choose another play than "The Lake." Her playing in "Alice Adams" shows that she is at last ready for the legitimate stage. Her mastery of tone color in the more delicate shades, her sense of timing, her carriage, are now those of an accomplished technician. It is altogether possible that Miss Hepburn may never compass the sort of part

which requires the display of the more elemental emotions, but in such parts is neither all the law nor all the prophets. There is outside these characters a great field of sensitive, civilized women, a field in which the American stage is not at present particularly rich in interpreters. Among these interpreters Katherine Hepburn ought to find a leading place. In "Alice Adams" she was well supported, especially by Fred Stone, Ann Shoemaker and Charles Grapewin. (At Radio City Music Hall.)

### *The Farmer Takes a Wife*

"THE FARMER Takes a Wife" will undoubtedly prove exceedingly popular in its screen version, probably much more popular than it was on the stage. In its original form it was a sincere, folksy and humorous portrayal of mid-nineteenth century life on the Erie Canal. I myself found it a little dull, a little too static for drama, and not racy enough of the soil to atone as a mere study of character. The basic idea of the love of a man for the farm and a girl for the canal was admirable, but the authors seemed to impose it from the outside rather than make it of the fiber of the story itself. Too often the subsidiary characters too seemed to be playing scenes out of vaudeville. There was in it, in short, a lack of ultimate reality. These things are all evident in the screen version, but the screen is able to do other things, notably in the employment of local color and extraneous embellishments. These have been skilfully introduced by Edwin Burke in his adaptation of the Elser-Connelly play, and Victor Fleming has worthily directed them. There is no excuse, that is in terms of the original story, for the introduction of John Wilkes Booth as a boy, and his remarks about Abraham Lincoln, yet this scene was extraordinarily poignant. Admirable too were the scenes along the canal, and the management of the crowds was equally excellent.

Henry Fonda, the Dan Harrow of the play, repeated his excellent impersonation in the screen version, and Janet Gaynor was in face, figure and mannerisms the twin sister of June Walker, who originally played it on Broadway. Good performances were also given by Charles Bickford as Jatham Klore, Slim Summerville as Fortune Friendly, Andy Devine as Elmer Otway, Margaret Hamilton as Lucy Gurget, and little Jane Withers appeared characteristically as Della. The appearance in successive weeks of two such films as "Alice Adams" and "The Farmer Takes a Wife" is another proof that the efforts of the Church and its Protestant allies to purge the screen of its filth, far from lowering the artistic calibre of films, has definitely raised it. Salaciousness is easy to attain; truth and beauty difficult. But the difficult path is the only path to the heights. It is to be hoped that the new season will prove Hollywood has had more than a temporary insight into this truth.

## Communications

### THE RANK AND FILE

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editor: With wisdom your clever and facile pen has returned to the subject, "The Rank and File." You have paid a compliment to *The Brooklyn Tablet* by a reference to our reflections on your first insertion. For this thanks from an admiring contemporary. We have noted your friendly call to readers to state their views.

In the first place we wish to record our ready acceptance of your underlying thought that in the Catholic philosophy of religion, the final and competent authority in any matter dealing directly or indirectly with our religion belongs to the hierarchy and the laity has nothing to do but follow with hope and enthusiasm. Every well-instructed member of the household of the faith will agree to your main thesis and confess satisfaction that the divine organization has provided such able and watchful supervision in the important realm of religion. The following reflections come of a friendly spirit:

1. The citation of the Pope's leadership in the field of Catholic Action was hardly pertinent. Catholic Action is scarcely concerned with such matters as the Kelly-Corbett bill nor should it be evidenced as though any difference of opinion obtains in its connection.

2. It was kind of you to suggest topics for my resting pillow, but your meaning was a bit beclouded and may have exposed your thought to the misinterpretation that the Catholic laity do not actually vision and appreciate the heavy routine of the average bishop. Few corporations and organizations have heads who give so much of their time and their very life to their causes as has the Catholic Church in the persons of the Pope and the members of the hierarchy. For myself I account the bishops as the great leaders of our age and our country.

3. You quote these two sentences: "What is more, it is our experience that bishops do not want to be bothered with all these extraneous problems. . . . They are busy men and have so many routine affairs that it is impossible to keep familiar with all current issues and to designate time, place, people and programs for initiating certain matters." By omitting the thought conveyed in between the two sentences you make me say something which was not intended. Perhaps this statement in condensed form of my viewpoint would be explanatory:

"The bishops have so many routine matters that it is impossible for them to keep familiar with all current issues. Bishop McDonnell once said when bothered about a civic matter as simple as the Kelly-Corbett bill: 'Please do not be bothering me about these matters which you can decide for yourself. You are an American citizen—a free man. You are a Catholic—whose missionary zeal should know no limit. Use your brains. If at any time I see you are on the wrong track, it will be easy to set you straight.' This is the view of most bishops."

Then after inadvertently omitting the meat of my statement you set forth this statement: "It is now suggested that the bishops go right on doing and being that forever while the great ideological and religious debates of the time are only 'certain matters' which a layman can, in his own good time, deal with in his own good way." It would seem when your editorial gives this strange and original thought you are saying something which was never suggested, unless by Bishop McDonnell and "most bishops." The allusion was, moreover, unnecessary since the matters which are vital to our dogmatic faith do not fall within the authority of any layman.

4. Now for the part which so many of ex-Governor Smith's friends would have him take in the agitation among American mothers and fathers that our half-filled school buses in the rural sections should lend a lift to that growing group of young Americans who are attending the religious public schools of all shades of belief which the United States Supreme Court has declared to be legal American schools. Your reference to "ecclesiastical lobbying" is beside the point. The fear that popular thought would be aroused against our bishops is idle. Only the very worst of bigots would have such an unfair notion. Return to the earlier thought of your "The Rank and File" and you will find yourself defending the position that Catholics should remain inactive until designated by the hierarchy in all matters that even most remotely touch the interests of Catholic citizens.

*The Tablet* took the stand that Catholics have purely civic problems upon which they have views and plan action. Such matters would include the Kelly-Corbett bus bill, the sale of salacious literature, the Mexican slaughter, the Moscow propaganda for Communism, the ruthless Hitlerism of Germany and the devilish movement for sterilization of humans and the massacre of the unborn. Catholics of education want to speak out on such matters. The higher their standing in the public estimation, the deeper the impression they will make. There must be other ways of showing our deep attachment to the Faith of our Fathers than merely attending religious devotions. Over 1,000,000 Catholics have sent letters and appeals to Governor Lehman on his veto and insulting memorandum. They were not designated; many were friends of the Governor; their action did not constitute "ecclesiastical lobbying."

Hundreds of "undesigned" contributions have been made by members of the laity to religion and good citizenship. Those performing them have the blessing of the bishops of the country. They know that the Church is strong where it encourages and stimulates. In our land as we see it we have to fear not over-activity or zealotness, but lethargy, pussyfooting and passing the buck. *THE COMMONWEAL* was born of the zeal of the laity—I do not believe it was "designated"—and it has performed a distinct work for the Church. It has the blessing and approbation of the bishops. Its editors can be trusted and have no fear of creating havoc. I hope that your future will remain as brilliant and free as your past.

PATRICK F. SCANLAN, Managing Editor,

*The Brooklyn Tablet.*

## Books

## Roman Jew and Roman Christian

*The Pope from the Ghetto. The Legend of the Family of Pier Leone, by Gertrude von le Fort; translated by Conrad M. R. Bonacino. New York: Sheed and Ward. \$2.50.*

PERHAPS it is an outgrowth of the immense vogue of biography that the historical novel seems again to be coming into its own. And it is interesting to find Catholic novelists of different nations recreating slices of medieval life—Gertrude von le Fort and Helen C. White, for instance, both turning back to the theoretic cooperation but actual conflict between Holy Roman Empire and holier Pope in the twelfth century. To be sure, the mighty Hildebrand is but one of a series of Pontiffs in the "Pope from the Ghetto": the actual and symbolic protagonists being Roman Christian and Roman Jew, particularly the paradoxical young Petrus Leonis, son of a convert Hebrew father, who himself becomes both priest and antipope.

It is a confused and somewhat confusing canvas, crowded with crusaders, Jewish rites (and Jewish wrongs!), popular prophets and the quarrels of semi-barbaric nobles. And the manner of story-telling adopted by Fraulein von le Fort, simulating as it does fragments from detached interviews and old records, does not make for clarity or easy reading. But there is elemental drama in her achievement. And there are lightning-flashes of Catholic mysticism which at moments suggest the profundities of Paul Claudel—as in the assurance of the aged churchman: "My son, justice exists only in heli; in heaven there is grace and on earth there is the cross." Some such thought would seem to be the keynote of this tragic history of conflict and schism and the search for a peace never quite captured in this enigmatic world.

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

## A Trifle Biased

*The Post-War World, by J. Hampden Jackson. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. \$2.50.*

IT IS no mean accomplishment to summarize the political and economic history of the entire world during the last sixteen years. Mr. Jackson has done a commendable job on the whole, and in a volume of 400 pages. He is an adept at interpreting and characterizing, although he often gives what is to be said for those of whose actions he cannot approve. His grasp of the political and economic difficulties that beset the various nations and peoples of the world is good; the problems of Japan and South Africa are set forth as clearly as those of France and Italy. Outspoken as he is, Mr. Jackson is generally accurate as to his facts. The view that Wilson was hoodwinked by the chief Allied diplomats is no longer accepted, however, and where did the author get the idea that Mussolini is a Catholic?

One of the six main parts of the book is devoted to Soviet Russia, the one large subject on which the author makes statements obviously questionable. Mr. Jackson

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points to resemblances between Soviet and czarist Russia and continues, "Yet there is more liberty in Russia today than before the revolution. Individuals have no longer the right to acquire and bequeath private property, but the national minorities at least preserve their own language and culture and enjoy the same privileges as pure-bred Russians; and all careers are open to talent, provided that talent is not anti-Soviet." Elsewhere he says, "Soviet festivals have taken the place of feasts of the Church; the Communist party has taken the place of the priesthood as the moral authority in the country. . . . But priests still walk openly in the streets of Moscow and administer the sacraments to the faithful. . . . It is poor criticism that interprets the crusade against the Churches as a crusade against God." One might suspect the author of gentle irony here were it not for various remarks scattered throughout his pages—on Germany, Austria, Spain, etc. On one occasion the British, by refusing to recognize Obregon, "resigned themselves to receiving Mexican news through the misleading channels of New York and the Catholic Church."

The chapters on the Near East, the Far East and the African Continent present conclusive evidence of worldwide aspirations toward national self-determination, which unquestionably mean that imperialism has passed its peak. The United States is not treated with particular originality or acumen, but our problems are outlined in adequate fashion. Mr. Jackson has no solution for the problems that beset the modern world beyond a vague leaning toward collectivism. On the other hand he has produced a volume which is informative, clear and remarkably well written.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN, JR.

## The Old Frontier

*The Civilization of the Old Northwest*, by Beverly W. Bond, jr. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.50.

IN A LARGE, documented research volume, Professor Bond of the University of Cincinnati narrates the story and describes the settlement and development of the Old Northwest in the rather forgotten period from the foundation of Marietta (1788) until the War of 1812. The main outline of its history is clear enough, but the minutiae, the leaders, the land-boomers, the speculating land companies, the meeting on the frontier of Yankees, foreigners and anti-slavery Southerners, the shadowy intrigues of Spaniards, Frenchmen and renegade Americans in years prior to the British evacuation of the fur posts and the purchase of Louisiana Territory, the beating down of the Indians at Fallen Timbers, the organization of the territorial government in accordance with Northwest Ordinance, the admission of Ohio into the Union and the erection of governments in Indiana, Illinois and Michigan territories is nowhere so realistically told in available and readable form. Some attention is given to the tolerant, democratic and humanitarian principles written into the constitution of Ohio which drew heavily from the constitution of Tennessee. Still Professor Bond leaves room for further constitu-

tional studies in this area. There are especially good chapters on the opening of transportation trails, commerce, the planting of cultural and social institutions and the organization of the religious denominations with special emphasis upon the dominant frontier sects of Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists.

The notes upon the slight beginnings of the Catholic Church could be improved. Gabriel Richard is not indexed. A few Irishmen are discernible by name, even though the blood of some of them may have been diluted: John Boyle, who declined the governorship of Illinois Territory, Attorney General Benjamin Doyle, William Flanagan from Boston, who was cashier of the ill-fated Detroit Bank, and John O'Ferrall, merchant of Cincinnati. One might desire a more candid account of the Scotch-Irish treatment of the poor Indians, of corruption in politics and in land sales, of ministers who gave up the Gospel to exploit the country and of the dissipation of school lands which I believe commenced rather early. The lack of a formal bibliography is fully compensated by complete and numerous footnotes which indicate laborious delvings in a wide variety of material. This study of the early Northwest is indeed a vindication of the American colonial (territorial policy) and the fruitfulness of the subject for scholar and reader.

RICHARD J. PURCELL.

### As We Say It

*A Dictionary of Modern American Usage*, by H. W. Horwill. New York: Oxford University Press. \$3.25.

THE AVERAGE American citizen will be surprised, instructed and amused by Mr. Horwill's book, which is less caustic than Fowler's now well-known standard manual but at least equally chatty and readable. None of us quite realizes how vast is the linguistic prairie which separates Oxford from Princeton. In England a "composition book" is an "exercise book." A London club member does not pay "dues" but a "subscription." Such a term as "drummer" is unknown abroad. There "to figure on" is to "make calculations respecting." A gallon of gas is bigger in Canada than in the United States. Mr. Horwill illustrates from dozens of authors. Possibly as good a sample of his method as any is offered by the word "dumb." "Hilaire Belloc, in 'The Contrast,' mentions that an American once said to him: 'The trouble with you English is that you are dumb,' and protests that in the modern world there are no men with a greater command of expression than the English. Whereupon the N. Y. Times (May 11, 1924) comments: 'Taking "dumb" in the ordinary meaning of the word, the old Parliamentarian was right; but, what the American meant by "dumb," using the vulgar speech here, was "stupid," being nothing more or less than the German *dumm*, foolish, stupid—which, of course, on the part of that American was slang, likewise a childish and stupid bit of rudeness.' This book is certain to get about in spite of hard times and the radio.

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**Briefer Mention**

*North to the Orient*, by Anne Morrow Lindbergh.  
 New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.50.

"NORTH to the Orient" fortunately seems much more the book of a young writer wanting to write a book than an opportune volume by a celebrity. Mrs. Lindbergh explains that she is recording a kind of magic "which could only strike spark about that time [1931]. A few years earlier it would have been impossible to reach these places; a few years later, and there will be no such isolation." Two other partial reasons for the route across the top of the continent by way of mysteriously isolated posts (and for the book) are furnished by quotations of Col. Lindbergh: "Well—it's the shortest. . . I like to feel that in flying I can mark one point on the map for my position and another for my destination, and that I can draw a line between the two, and follow it." Although the book is not exhaustive in any line, it does present the atmosphere of the flight as a mechanical and scientific enterprise and as a fascinating tour to very unvisited places: Baker Lake, Aklavik, Point Barrow, Kamchatka, the Chishima of Japan. There is a consistent note of wistfulness and somewhat sadness produced by the prose style (which is definitely literary and of course not completely old-masterish) which perhaps brings one face to face with much, and certainly with the fact that consciously literary writing nearly always makes an author seem conscious of hidden pathos. The numerous maps furnished by Charles A. Lindbergh are perfectly fine.

*What Think Ye of Christ?* by C. C. Martindale, S.J.  
 New York: Benziger Brothers. \$1.00.

HERE are five sermons by a brilliant preacher on a topic which should be most familiar and unfortunately is obscured by many things. Father Martindale begins by reminding us that Christ was truly man and ends on our union as men with God. It is fine, strong theology in a brief space, and from a mind rich with knowledge and reflection on the life of Our Lord, beautifully simple and practical.

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